

## **I can't hold it (but I feel it in my bones) by orphan\_account**

**Category:** Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** Gen, Set between 1x03 and 1x04, along with some 1x04, angry children, character death (believed but not actual), very very very angst

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**Characters:** Dustin Henderson, Eleven (Stranger Things), Lucas Sinclair, Mike Wheeler, will byers (mentioned)

**Relationships:** Eleven & Mike Wheeler

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**Summary:**

*No good comes from following sirens.*

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(aka: How Eleven gets home after 'Holly, Jolly')

## I can't hold it (but I feel it in my bones)

### Author's Note:

- For [IrisVioletta](#).

The lovely @IrisVioletta gave me this idea in a comment based on my other fic '[you'd say on with the show](#)' which is about when the boys first found Eleven, but you don't need to read that to understand this. I hope you enjoy this!

Dustin can't bring himself to run after Mike as his friends leaves him, Lucas, and Eleven by the shore of the quarry, can barely bring himself to walk to his bike. Tears are streaming down his face, and he calls for Mike one more time, but he pedals away, far away from them. Abandoning them.

He tries to take a deep breath but the tears keep coming and he feels like a pathetic baby. There goes Toothless, crying again.

"I'm going home," Lucas says, his voice breaking a little as he wipes his tears off his own face.

Now Dustin can move, and he lunges forward to grab Lucas's elbow, "You can't leave."

"Why not?" The words are quiet yet angry. Like he's snapping at him, but too tired to do it.

"You need to help me with Eleven," He gestures to the girl frantically. He finally looks over at her, and she looks like she's either about to cry or scream, and he honestly feels the same way. But he doesn't do either, because he needs to get home so he can cry in peace.

"She is *not* my problem," Lucas practically snarls. "Especially after what she did."

Dustin feels like crying again, but that just makes him angry and suddenly he's in Lucas's face. "You really want to run through the

woods? Alone? After everything?”

Eleven speaks up quietly, “Stop it.” He almost doesn’t hear her, but he steps away. Fighting Lucas won’t do anything but bring attention to the fact they’re there, and they still need to hide.

That’s when he hears voices approaching, so he grabs both Eleven and Lucas and tugs them back behind the fire truck they’re already hiding behind.

Lucas looks around a bit, looking between Dustin and Eleven, before exhaling. “Fine. I’ll ride back with you, but she’s riding *your* bike and staying at *Mike’s* house. I want nothing to do with her.”

He looks over at Eleven and she’s now looking at the ground, standing against the engine. She looks up at him, like she sensed he’s staring, and is now staring at him with wide, scared eyes like when they first met her.

And he has no more fight in him anymore.

“Okay?” Lucas demands, voice hushed as they hide from any cops.

“I- Okay. Yes, let’s just get her back to Mike’s,” Dustin says. Lucas nods and they sneak back over to their bikes.

His bike isn’t built like Mike’s, but Eleven should be able to ride it with him. “Hop on,” He tells her after he’s climbed onto his, while she stands there staring at him like he’s a zoo exhibit.

Slowly, to Lucas’s chagrin and Dustin’s impatience, Eleven finally climbs on and her hands rest on his shoulders rather than his waist like Mike but whatever.

As he pedals out of the forest, he can still hear the sirens and the crying starts up again. He feels like an idiot. For believing Eleven when she said Will was still alive, and for following the sirens in the first place.

No good comes from following sirens.

He can’t wipe at his face without taking his hands off the handlebars,

so he tries to blink them away and snuffle as he tries to see with only the light from his and Lucas's flashlights.

He feels Eleven's hands on his shoulders squeeze once gently, and he goes rigid in the fear she might make him do something crazy like crash the bike but then he realizes that she's trying to comfort him.

And that makes him feel a bit better.

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Lucas goes to keep pedaling past Dustin's house, to get the Weirdo off of his hands, but Dustin is no longer beside him. He turns the bike around and sees that his friend is now straddling the bike in front of his house, no longer mobile, with Eleven getting off.

"What the hell are you doing?" Lucas moves so he's straddling his bike too, only a couple feet away from them.

"This is my house," Dustin says, raising his hand to gesture to his house. "I figured you could ride Eleven the rest of the way."

The idea makes his blood turn cold, "No, *not* happening."

"What, is she supposed to walk the rest of the way?" Dustin says, his voice hushed but harsh. In the streetlights, he can see his face is covered in tears and Lucas has to look away. "Look, you live right by Mike so it makes the most sense for *you* to take her."

"Why do I have to take the weirdo?"

"What if someone finds her?" Dustin interrupts. "What if they take her to Pennhurst, or to prison, or to the Bad Men? Then we'll *never* find out what happened to Will, so just..." Then he sighs and he looks so tired and Lucas bites his own lip. "Please, ride her to his house and then we can deal with everything tomorrow."

Lucas finally looks over at her, who's picking at a string on her sweatshirt. She looks up at him and she looks scared, maybe even at the mention of the Bad Men. "Fine," He says. "But I'm not happy about dealing with the weirdo. C'mon, Eleven." She flinches a bit, but he doesn't care as he waits for her to climb onto his bike. He feels

weird about her being on it and potentially ruining it, but Dustin's right, she might be able to be useful tomorrow. Plus, Mike probably won't forgive him if he loses her, even after everything. This stupid girl, ruining everything.

Her hands stay on his shoulders the entire ride to their cul-de-sac, and sometimes he thinks she can hear him cry or he can hear her whimper, but neither of them say anything.

Finally, they're at their street and he gets off the bike.

"I can't believe you," He tells her, the rage inside him bubbling over. "You lied to me, to all of us, telling us that Will was alive. Where do you get off saying that?"

Weirdo is flinching away from him, but that doesn't stop him. "How could you say that to us?" He asks, finally starting to completely cry. "He's one of my closest friends, and you-"

She says something, but he can't hear her. She reaches for him but he bats her hand away.

"Still alive," She says, her voice quiet but clear this time.

"Stop lying!" He snaps at her and she looks down. "Don't say that, don't you dare-" He's crying again and he feels like a loser for crying in front of the Weirdo. "Get inside."

After he turns away from her to go push his bike back to his house, he hears her say "I promise."

His whole body goes rigid and he stops in his movements, ready to turn around. But then he doesn't, he just continues to wheel his bike in.

He doesn't have the energy for this.

He just doesn't.

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Mike sits in his bed, finally alone. He's crying, as quietly as he can.

He can't have his mom walking in after finally leaving him be. All he wants is to be alone.

And, of course, that's when the SuperComm starts static, and he hears Lucas's voice say, *"Mike, it's Lucas. Do you copy? Over."*

Dammit, he should have turned the stupid thing off.

Mike doesn't want to answer, but he does anyway. "No, I *don't* copy. Over and out," He says into the radio, and goes to close the antenna when Lucas speaks again.

*"Eleven's outside your house, Mike. Or I bet she got into your house, but you just left her in the woods. Over."*

"Yeah, she lied to us. About Will, about everything," Fresh tears prick his eyes and he hastily wipes them away. "Over and out—"

*"Jesus! Stop saying that! God, I- Go deal with the weirdo so I can go to sleep. I'll- I'll talk to you tomorrow. Over and out."*

At a loss, Mike says, "Over and out." And he finally closes the antenna.

He opens his door and looks around to make sure his family won't come looking for him. As grateful as he was to hug his mom after coming home, he doesn't have the energy for it right now. As quickly and quietly as he can, he walks down the stairs to the basement.

Like he kinda suspected, Eleven is sitting in the fort quietly, not looking at him. He should be surprised she got into his house, but if she can make a door slam with her mind, she can probably open one too.

"What are you doing back here?" He asks.

She says nothing. Just looks up at him. He's not sure what he wanted her to say, so he's glad she doesn't say anything.

"Why did you lie to us?" He asks, and his voice cracks this time and he hates it. But he needs to know.

She opens her mouth and her eyes are shiny but she doesn't speak.

"You know what, forget it," He snaps at her and a tear falls down her face. He hates the fact she's about to cry. She doesn't have the right to cry, not after what she did. What she did to him and his friends. "Don't bother."

"Mike-" She says, her voice small.

"Don't!" He tells her, yells at her. She flinches away from him, and she hasn't done that since they met and that makes him mad too. But then it makes him sad, because even after everything he doesn't want her to hate him, so he tries to speak softer. "I said don't. Stay here, if you want, or leave, I don't care. Whatever. But friends don't do what you did to us." With that, he stalks back up the stairs and forces himself into bed.

He stays up there for about an hour, tossing and turning. But then he decides to go back to the basement, taking his SuperComm in case Lucas needs to talk.

She's looking at him, slightly scared, as he walks down the stairs.

"This doesn't mean I forgive you," He tells her.

She looks confused by the words, but he doesn't feel like explaining, so he just goes through the box of Dungeons and Dragons stuff and grabs the drawings Will has left in his basement.

He realizes with a start that he'll probably have to give them to Mrs. Byers, and that makes him cry again.

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So many people have yelled at Eleven tonight with loud voices, and even the thought of it still scares her. Papa never raised his voice, but sometimes the other scientists did. It makes her feel bad.

Something in her wonders if friends are allowed to yell at one another.

From her place in the fort, she can hear Mike cry every so often,

because he thinks his friend is gone.

But he isn't, she knows it. She can feel him through the Void and he's not dead. She knows it, because she can't communicate with the dead, barely even feel them in the darkness. Papa tried to make her, but she couldn't, and so she got sent to the Room.

But she can communicate with Will.

There's a radio in the basement, Mike brought it down, and she realizes that it is almost similar to the intercoms in the Lab.

Looking back at Mike, she realizes she can prove Will is still alive, and then he won't be angry with her anymore.

She grabs it off the table and goes back into the fort and starts to fiddle with the dials. She doesn't have Papa around to tell her how to do things, but she tries anyway. She can do it without him.

The radio crackles, but she can't get it to show Will's voice, even though she knows he's speaking. Frustrated, she continues to fiddle with the dials as the noises get louder and more frequent, but stay wrong.

"Can you please stop that?" Mike asks her, finally looking at her. He doesn't sound angry anymore, just sleepy.

She turns the radio off. But then she can feel Will again, the vibrations from his voice. Can't Mike hear it? It's so loud. She turns the radio back on and continues to search for it. Must be louder. Needs to be louder.

"Are you deaf?" Mike says, angry again. But she can't pay attention to him. Not when she's so close. "I thought we were friends, you know?" At that word, the one they keep using for Will, she looks up. No one has called her a friend before.

"But friends tell each other the truth," He says. "And they *definitely* don't lie to each other. You made me think Will was okay, that he was still out there, but he wasn't- he wasn't!"

She looks away from him. He looks so sad, so angry. And she did that



to him. But she wants to fix it, why won't he let her fix it?

"Maybe you thought you were helping, but you weren't," He says and she shivers slightly, because all she wants to do is help. That's all she's able to do. "You hurt me," He tells her, and she looks at him in the eye and sees he means it, but Mike always means everything he says. But this hurts more. "Do you understand?" He says.

*I'm sorry, Mike, but I can fix it.* She wants to say but she doesn't.

"What you did sucks." She doesn't know what 'sucks' means but the angry tone tells her that it's not good. "Lucas was right about you. All along."

The mean one was right about her. It must be true.

But she knows it isn't. She can still feel Will like she always has, even when they say the small boy be pulled from the large bath she *knows* he's still alive. She just has to prove it and maybe Mike will like her again.

She puts all her energy into it, and feels blood start to trickle down her nose, but all of a sudden a voice she's never heard but *felt* before comes through on the tiny intercom.

*"So come on and let me know, should I stay or should I go? Should I stay or should I go now?"*

Mike runs over to her and she holds out the radio. He finally isn't looking at her angrily and all the hurt in her head is worth it. *"Should I stay or should I go now? If I go there will be trouble, and if I stay it will be double."*

Mike starts speaking into it, his voice fast, "Will, is that you? It's Mike, do you copy?"

She wants to explain that's not how it works but her head feels tired and she's not good with words like he is.

Will starts to fade from her reach, just as Mike gets more frantic, "Will?!"

Mike lowers the radio and looks at her, and he's soft and nice again and it feels like a smile inside her. "Was that- was it-"

He can't seem to get the words. And maybe, just this time, she can help him. So she confirms for him with a soft smile that finds itself on her face to match what she's feeling, "Will."

**Author's Note:**

I hope you enjoyed! Thanks again @IrisVioletta for the idea and the help, and also a major shoutout to my writing wife @ceruleanstorm/@sstrangerthaneleven (tumblr) Savannah for helping me!